

Argo receives kudos for a job well done!

Recognizing that road and bridge maintenance contractors are one of the ministry's partners in providing a safe and reliable transportation system in British Columbia, we're pleased to see the kudos they are receiving for their efforts.

The following is quoted from a letter received by Grant Lachmuth, District Manager, Transportation, Okanagan-Shuswap, from the president of the Chase Creek Community Association.

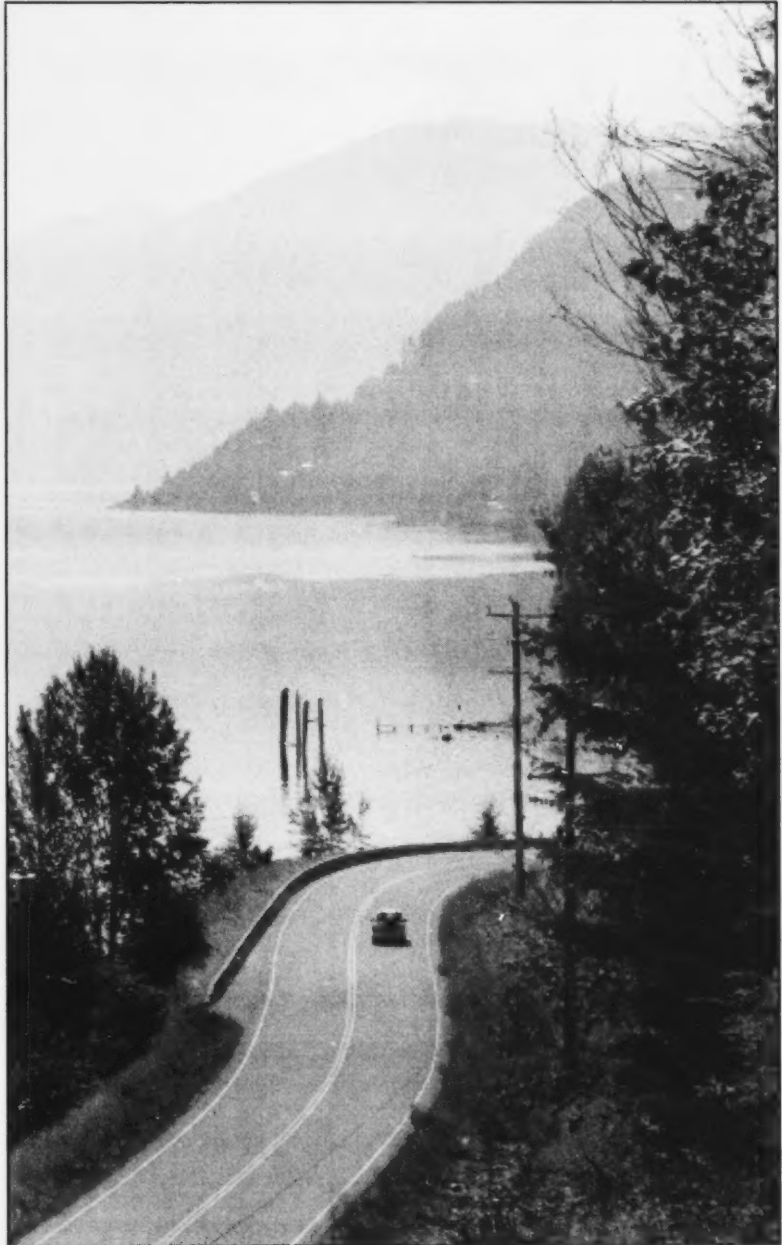
"As president of the Chase Creek Community Association, it is my pleasant responsibility to tell you that our association is pleased with the job Argo, the company contracted to provide road maintenance in our area, has done over this winter.

"We had a fairly rapid snowfall which dumped 2 or 3 cumulative feet at one point this winter. Argo kept up with this challenge well, and despite the winter condition, most of us had only minor difficulty in travelling the roads.

"The company has also proven to be approachable regarding any concerns we have, and they appear to be sensitive to community needs.

"At one point, for example, we planned a major fundraising event at our community hall, but we couldn't gain access due to snowfall. Argo was able to come up and clear out our road and our parking area with little prior warning, ensuring that the event was a success.

"Needless to say, we are grateful for the attitude that Argo has taken in relation to our community, and I am very pleased to call this to your attention."



A Kootenay Lake moment . . .

Ron Wiebe, a Project Information Officer in Prince George, has a penchant for photography, and he sent this photo along to us. Check inside this issue for more.

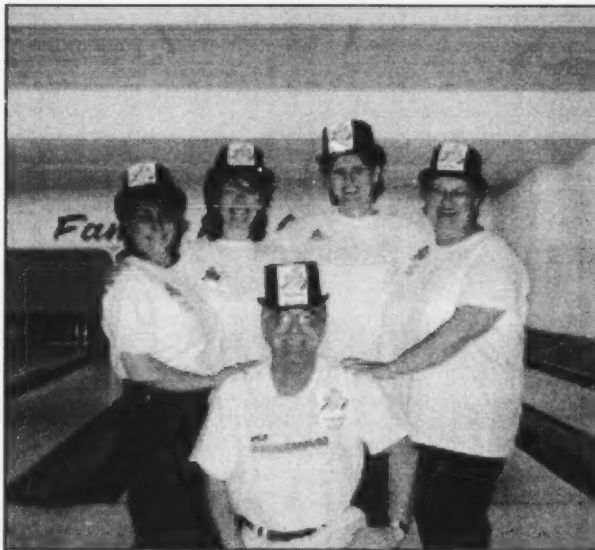
Bowling event raises \$900 for kids

Submitted by Crystal Chenier, Secretary, Finance and Administration, Kamloops

Once again, the Southern Interior Region "Highway Rollers" participated in the Big Brothers Big Sisters Bowl for Kids' Sake annual fundraising event. Not only is this day full of fun in support of kids within the community, but it is also their most important fundraising event.

This year, the Highway Rollers raised over \$900 for the event and had an enjoyable time. Not being regular bowlers, reaching the second floor was a difficult task for some of the team members.

"Strikes for Tykes" has significant meaning for three of the bowlers. One of the bowlers has a son who was matched to a big brother when he was younger, and to this day he has many fond memories of having a Big Brother. For the other team members, their daughters were fortunate to participate in the services provided by the organization. Bowlers feel this particular day is their way to contribute to an organization that provided them with so much support.



Bridge area managers have a BIRDE

Submitted by Brian Barker, Manager, Asset Condition Evaluation, and Ivana Mazuch, BMIS Project Manager

Bridge area managers have a new tool to replace a paper-based system to undertake their inspections of bridges, major culverts, tunnels, sign bridges and retaining walls. The Bridge Inspection Remote Data Entry (BIRDE) project was completed in February.

Danny Keeler, chair of the Bridge Inspection Committee, together with Rod Mochizuki, A.Sc.T., Terry MacKay, Mike Odowichuk, Ed Dodds, Zbigniew Radzimowski, Bill L. Becker, P. Eng, Grainger Wilson, Gary Farnden, P.Eng., Jeff Siemens and Ivana

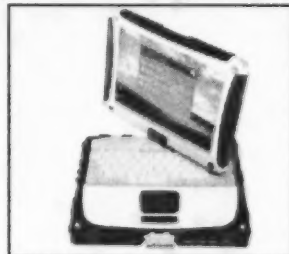
Mazuch, reviewed current processes and determined that completing data entry in the field could save time, reduce errors in data entry and reduce overall costs.

The software for the system was developed by Tristin Baylis of Foresite Consultants Ltd. in Salmon Arm. Sajedur Rahman's investigated the field use of various tablet PCs by other jurisdictions.

The committee recommended the Panasonic Toughbook 18 be selected for this project. This tablet PC allows inspectors to enter data via keyboard, handwriting or voice recognition software, and they can store digital pictures. The inspection data



and images can then be instantly uploaded to the BMIS central database once the tablet PC is connected to the LAN at the office. This change in business is anticipated to result in an annual savings of \$70,000 in data entry time and effort across the province!



Praise for Jim Hawes

A note of recognition was received from the Brisco Recreation Commission to Jim Hawes, project manager for the Brisco/Botts Bridge replacements.

Hello Jim.....Just thought I would send you a note (belated) of thanks on behalf of the residents of Brisco and surrounding area. The bridges are fantastic and the Bridge Contractor did a great job. We are happy campers!

Thanks for everything.

*Warner E. Einer, President
Brisco Recreation Commission
Serving the communities of
Brisco, Spur Valley &
Spillimacheen*



Bulkley-Stikine staff show real spirit of giving

Submitted by Libby Dorey, Clerk,
Smithers

Marlene Keehn, District Operations Technician, coordinated a Christmas gift collection from district staff for the local Christmas Hamper Program. This year we were asked to donate Christmas presents suitable for teenagers.

Note there are quite a few gift certificates in the mix as well.

Also, Leona Constantineau, District Services Manager, coordinated the year-round collection of returnable bottles with the proceeds going to the Provincial Employees' Community Services Fund.



Ministry's claims unit possesses wealth of specialized experience

**Submitted by Bobbie Mitchell,
Director's Secretary, Construction
and Maintenance**

The staff of this busy unit – Kirsten Meyer, Mel Kitson, Isabel Allan, Cecile Frost and Marc Daubner - form the team of dedicated employees (with a combined total of 110 years of service!) who shoulder a rather heavy claims workload. They respond to a large number of inquiries, process an even larger number of claims and also deal with litigation matters.

The Claims Unit governs the direction, development, coordination and operation of the claims aspects of the ministry's risk management program. This unit manages the following types of claims:

Claims BY the ministry:

The ministry has a claim when damage occurs to its highways. The scope of "highway" in this respect includes the traveled portion of the highway, its shoulders, its infrastructure as well as all such other structures as bridges, underpasses, overpasses, retaining walls, lights, signs, crash barriers and intersection light controllers, and so on. Damages to highways are, for the most part, a result of negligent driving resulting in accidents; a smaller number are occasioned by willful acts such as vandalism or theft. The ministry also incurs costs when motor vehicle accidents result in clean-up or flagging. It is the Claims Unit's mandate to investigate, identify the parties involved and demand from them or their Insurers for the costs of repairs for these damages.

There are 645 open files for damage reports, with approximately 10 to 20 new invoices coming in each day. These invoices are received from the road and bridge maintenance contractors as well as from ministry electrical staff and privatized electrical contractors, for cost



Back row: Marc Daubner, Isabel Allan, Mel Kitson. Front row: Cecile Frost, Kirsten Meyer

recovery for damage to government property mainly incurred due to motor vehicle accidents. Once the files have been entered onto the database by Kirsten Meyer, Data Management and Systems Specialist, they are then forwarded to the Claims Representatives, either Isabel Allan or Cecile Frost. If a responsible party to the incident is known, the Claims Representatives will work with either the responsible party's insurance company or the responsible party themselves to recover costs for damages.

Recoveries: All costs recovered are forwarded back to the contractors involved in repairs by way of a monthly payback report that is generated by Kirsten Meyer. This report is then forwarded to Accounts Payable for

distribution into each contractor's account.

A copy of the payback report is also forwarded to each contractor receiving a payback with detailed information regarding amounts recovered. The average payback is about \$90,000 a month.

Claims AGAINST the ministry:

The public at large may claim against the ministry when they sustain bodily injury in their role as either a driver or pedestrian, damage to their homes and/or lands, or to their vehicles while travelling on provincial highways, which are alleged to have arisen out of ministry construction activities, ministry design or

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NEWS FLASH: Cuda Brown turns 50!

Submitted by Betty McCaw, A/Manager,
Finance, Kamloops

Cuda Brown, financial officer in the Southern Interior Region, turned 50 on February 11. In honour of her day, the finance staff all wore black and presented her with a "bouquet" of old prunes.

Teresa Beppe supplied one of her famous cakes, and Cuda was brought into the main office where several of the staff from the building called out surprise and shared in cake and a roast on the attributes of growing old. Happy Birthday, Cuda, from all of us!



Claims unit a busy shop with great people

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maintenance operations. About 160 general claims against the ministry are open, with approximately five new claims coming in each day. There are also 260 litigation files open, with approximately nine new actions coming in each month.

Here's some information about the staff of the Claims Unit

Kirsten Meyer - Systems and Data Management Specialist

Kirsten manages and monitors the Claims Section databases, produces statistical and audit reports for the ministry, collects claims information from within the ministry as well as from external sources or systems, maintains filing systems, and provides other support services as required.

Isabel Allan - Claims Representative

Isabel's position primarily deals with the even-numbered claims by the ministry, which entails the recovery and payment of expenses incurred by either the maintenance contractors or ministry staff for highway accident response. This involves the collection and investigation of all relevant information regarding these accidents and the required repairs.

Recovery of these costs is pursued against third parties and/or their insurers that have been deemed responsible for these incidents. This involves liaising with insurance companies, vehicle registries, police authorities, lawyers, ministry district and regional staff as well as the defendants themselves and other public authorities.

Isabel also provides direction and information regarding applicable maintenance contracts and standards and applicable legislation when dealing with highway accident responses.

She is also an active participant in the dispute resolution process, engaged with ICBC representatives for the settlement of contentious claims. This process allows each party to negotiate toward a settlement and avoids the costly and somewhat lengthy legal process. On a monthly basis, she produces reports listing all claims files that are coming up to their limitation date to ensure that these files do not expire prior to reaching settlements and provides notification of same to the Legal Services Branch and ICBC.

In the absence of the Data Management Clerk and on an as-needed basis, Isabel is able to produce statistical

and audit reports pertaining to damage to government property and assists with data entry of new files, updates on existing files and closing files.

Isabel also provides information and services to users accessing the Chargeable Maintenance Claims form (H36) and the Summary of Costs Pages (H36A &/or H36B) forms both electronically (Internet/Intranet) and manually. Isabel has done a remarkable job in this respect.

Cecile Frost - Claims Representative

Cecile handles all the odd-numbered claims by the ministry in the same manner as Isabel. She is also a valuable member of the Alternate Dispute Resolution group and provides a common-sense approach to complex matters and issues.

Mel Kitson - Claims Adjuster

Mel is responsible for investigating and adjusting complex claims by the ministry and all the claims against the ministry. He provides advice and guidance to regional and district offices on claims issues and identifies, documents and monitors new risk trends and ministry conditions that may affect policies, procedures, training and the financial commitments involved in the resolution of claims.

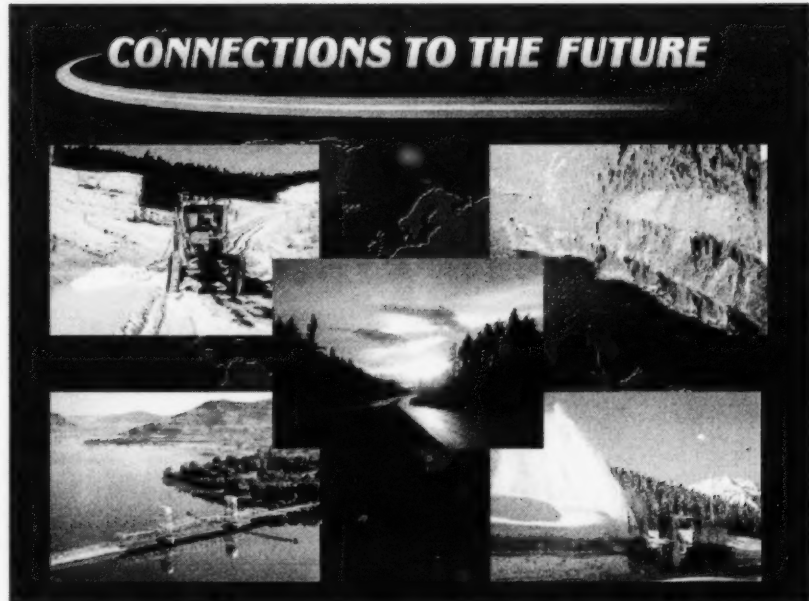
Vancouver event an eye-opener for ministry staff from all over B.C.

By Paul Lidgate, Senior Writer,
Corporate Writing Services

Ministry employees who attended the Connections to the Future forum in Vancouver on February 4 enjoyed the experience, learned a lot and would like to see it repeated. That's the clear impression you get after talking to some of those who were there.

Held February 4 at the Vancouver Airport Conference Resort, the one-day forum brought together a dozen leaders from B.C.'s biggest players in transportation. Presidents and vice-presidents from Vancouver International Airport, the Port of Vancouver, the Prince Rupert Port Authority, CP Rail, CN, BC Ferries and TransLink were all there. Transport Canada, the Business Council of B.C., the B.C. Trucking Association and the regional airport in Terrace were also among those represented by top officials.

"It was wonderful, fabulous," said Lyna Chang, an administrative assistant at the ministry's headquarters. "I really enjoyed being there. I don't very often get a chance to travel and meet other people in the ministry, so this was a real team-building opportunity." Lyna and others said it was great to be able to meet other ministry employees they had only talked to on the phone. While that was a particular appeal for Lyna, she also enjoyed a presentation made at the forum by Don Krusel, president and chief executive officer of the Port of Prince Rupert. Krusel talked about Prince Rupert's efforts to develop a container-shipment port and to expand its role as a cruise ship destination. "I know it really is the way he said it was," said Lyna, who is originally from Prince Rupert and whose mother still lives there. "People there are really counting on the cruise ships and the port going ahead."



Ministry forum was all about connecting our work to the world around us

In Terrace, Larry Bartsoff is a weigh scale supervisor. He thinks his region has a bright economic future, and he appreciated getting a chance to hear from some of those responsible for making that future a reality. "Very, very, very much," Larry said when asked if he enjoyed the forum in Vancouver. "I can't express how much I appreciate going." Larry was able to talk directly to Transportation Minister Kevin Falcon and Deputy Minister Dan Doyle at the event, an opportunity he was thankful for. But he most appreciated a chance to learn more about the ministry and "how it's all set up, how we work together," he said. "As I watched people come out, they were more informed. I met people from the Kootenays, Vancouver Island, eastern British Columbia. We're all very encouraged. I hope they continue having these forums every two years, if not sooner."

Not everyone was so enthusiastic — at least not initially. Bruce Crawford, a gravel management technician in Kamloops, admits he went to the forum just planning to listen to a bunch of people talk. "But when I got there, I was quite impressed. It was interesting to listen to all the other sectors and what they had to say. I was pleasantly surprised," Bruce said. "I have a better impression of how the transportation system is working in the province, with the ports and airports and TransLink. But especially the ports; how it all impacts the traffic coming through our part of the province." If there was one aim Deputy Minister Dan Doyle had for the forum, it may have been to help open employees' eyes to the bigger picture. Bruce Crawford's a perfect example. "We all get wrapped up in our own little world at work, but when we look around, we find there are all these

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A friendly Fort George welcome

He must be winning friends and influencing people, because when Danny Morris convened a recent meeting, staff in Fort George District were so enthused (or something like that) they baked a cake and decorated the room! As for the content of the meeting, well, let's just say that the opening ceremony was definitely the highlight!



Forum showed transportation is about connecting work of ministry, industry

(Continued from page 5)

other people involved in it," Bruce said.

That was exactly the impression Chad Tenney came away with. "The fact that the airports and ports and rail people all feel the same way about transportation and that they're all investing in infrastructure, that was interesting," Chad said. "It was good to hear them all talking about having the same priority." Chad also echoed other people's comments in saying that taking in the forum made him feel good about the ministry and about being part of it.

Over in the Peace, meanwhile, area manager Neil Wood said that while he sees a bit of a connection between the forum and his day-to-day work, he was impressed by the wide scope of the discussions. "I thought it was good to get more of a global perspective," he said. "I work in the district office, so I don't get much exposure to ports and airports, so it was good to see some information from other transportation sectors. I wasn't really aware, but seeing that everything's really busy and moving forward, that was good." Fort St. John, where Neil works, is a long way from

"Just knowing there are so many people thinking about B.C. and the direction we should be going in. It was good to see."

- Kevin Henderson

Vancouver, but Neil said a presentation by TransLink CEO Pat Jacobsen was among the most interesting to him. Jacobsen had talked about the challenge of operating an integrated transportation agency, one responsible for roads, transit, SkyTrain and more, in the Lower Mainland.

Coming from the Lower Mainland, Kevin Henderson, an engineer-in-training in Burnaby, said he was excited by "the whole team aspect" of the forum, the way it brought together people from TransLink and other agencies. He was able to meet a Transport Canada official and talk with Deputy Minister Dan Doyle at the event. "I wouldn't be able to do

that anywhere else," Kevin said. His biggest impression of the day? "Just knowing there are so many people thinking about B.C. and the direction we should be going in. It was good to see. Just sitting here, and even just as a member of the public, it's good to know there's so much high-level discussion going on," Kevin said. One thing Kevin was quick to point out was that the forum's message was really driven home because it came directly from industry leaders, heads of multi-billion-dollar companies and large regional authorities. "In my line of work, you usually don't get to hear from the port authorities, the airports and so forth, so that was great."

The speeches and presentations were filled with facts that help put our ministry's work in perspective. In fact, there was just too much presented there to do it justice here. That's why Deputy Minister Dan Doyle has asked that a comprehensive set of materials be put together that make the information easy to understand and easy to use. Gloria Valle's Corporate Writing Services unit is working on that right now, and you'll hear more as things come together in the weeks ahead.

Ministry given awards by Consulting Engineers of B.C.

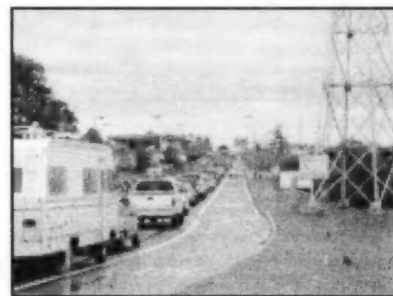
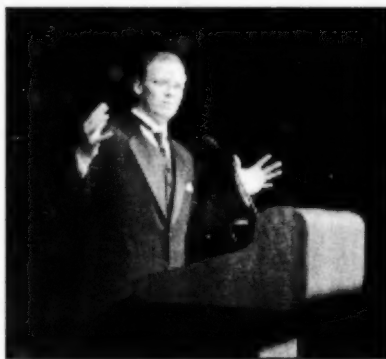
On March 5, the black-tie gala event for the 2005 CEBC Awards for Engineering Excellence was held at the Westin Bayshore Resort and Marina in Vancouver. Three Ministry of Transportation projects received significant awards.

Associated Engineering (B.C.) Ltd. (with Golder Associates) of the Sea-to-Sky Highway Alliance Team received the top award, the Lieutenant Governor's Award for Paving the Way - Sea-to-Sky Test Section, as well as an Award of Excellence in the Transportation Engineering Category. This project also received the first place award for the Deputy Minister's Consulting Engineer Awards Specialized Services Category on February 3. The ministry project manager was Rob Ahola and the on-site ministry rep was Ed Gohl.

Two Awards of Excellence are not generally given in the same category, but the judging panel decided there were two worthy projects.

Urban Systems Ltd. (with Brybil Projects, Golder Associates, Sandwell Engineer and Northwest Hydraulic Consultants (nhc) Ltd.) also received the Award of Excellence for Yoho Bridge and Approaches on the Trans-Canada Highway in the Kicking Horse Canyon. Initially the ministry project manager was Bill Smith. It's now Jon Jensen.

The IBI Group received the Award of Excellence in the Soft Engineering Category for the cross-border Advanced Traveller Information System at the Douglas and Pacific Highway border crossings on highways 99 and 15. The system provides border delay information to motorists. The ministry project manager was Valerie Fabick and the on-site ministry rep was Laurie Bullivant. Congratulations to everyone!



Pictured above are recipients of Consulting Engineers of British Columbia Awards for Engineering Excellence, and the three Ministry of Transportation projects that won awards. At top left, Transportation Minister Kevin Falcon addresses the crowd on hand for the gala event.

Darren Lincoln making an impression

Submitted by Norm Parkes, Regional Manager, Programming and Partnerships, Kamloops

On February 15, Darren Lincoln was recognized for the amazing work he has done during his first year as Manager, Property Services. During his tenure as manager, Darren has built a strong and capable team. They consistently deliver a quality product on time. Not only does Darren lead and coach his group, but when the going gets tough, he jumps in and handles files himself.

Darren's family is very important to him. In recognition of the extra effort he has put in, the ministry treated him and his girls to a morning of fun and games at a local fun house followed by a light lunch. Congratulations, Darren, and well done.



Pair recognized with Premier's Awards

The Premier's Awards for Innovation and Excellence were launched in June 2004 to showcase the best examples of innovation and excellence; strengthen pride and identity among employees internally; and help build the external reputation of the public service.

It was a proud event for the Ministry of Transportation on November 30 at the Victoria Conference Centre when Gregg Singer, Director, Border Infrastructure Program, and Nick May, Senior Manager, Properties, were honoured.

Gregg was the first recipient of the Premier's Award for Leadership, with particular recognition for his role as Project Director of the Vancouver Island Highway Project (VIHP). As a leader, Gregg recognizes the value of all of his team members with ministry staff or consultants. He is well known for his energy, innovation and skills as a mentor

and coach. Congratulations, Gregg!

Nick May received the Leadership Finalist Award in the Leadership category in recognition of his excellent work in significantly improving relations and forming strong and effective partnerships with numerous First Nations communities.

Agreements that once took six years have been streamlined to only two years. Nick has demonstrated that with perseverance, respect and creativity, new and positive relationships can be established. Congratulations, Nick!

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Top photo: Gregg Singer (centre) receives his award. **Bottom photo:** Nick May (centre) receives his finalist award. Both are pictured with Hon. Joyce Murray, Minister of Management Services, and Ken Dobell, Deputy Minister to the Premier.



Applying a positive outlook can help us all

It seemed interesting that recently while on a Dynamic Writing course, I came across this quote in a book entitled "Powerful Business Writing, Say What You Mean and Get What You Want" by Tom McKeown (published by McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1992). You just never know where you're going to find some words to reflect on.

"Have you noticed that open-minded people and organizations employ the Positive Approach, as well as the You Attitude? They think, talk and act as though things were possible. They create interesting directions out of chaos, inspired solutions out of difficulty. They radiate lightness, energy and humour as they fulfill their potential.

"Closed-minded people and organizations adopt a negative approach. They talk as though things were difficult or impossible. They doubt, dwell on difficulties and use rules to guide every action. They refuse to consider problems as possible of solution, and they radiate arrogance, sarcasm and fear alternately."

All of us get to choose our "minded-ness" and approach to people relationships, work and other aspects of our lives. Choose well.

~ Cindi Trowbridge, Editor

Tips and tricks from ISB

Submitted by Cathy Grossmith

Outlook E-mail - Using Blind CC

Use the Bcc when you are sending an e-mail to a wide audience. This way, you will not see a lengthy list of names when the e-mail is printed. This is useful when you don't want or need a distribution list. To add this field to your address bar, open a message, go to the View menu and click Bcc Field.

Windows XP - Adding Quick Launch Bar

The Quick Launch Bar allows easy access to frequently used programs. To activate the Quick Launch Bar: Right click on the Start button and choose Properties, click the Taskbar tab and check the box for Show Quick Launch (note: some workstations say Activate Quick Launch toolbar). To add a program to the Quick Launch Bar:

Click the Start then choose All Programs. Right click, drag and drop the program icon onto the Quick Launch bar. When the message box pops up choose Copy Here.



Pictured (l to r): Tamara Vrooman, Deputy Minister of Finance, Veena Sundher, Arn van Iersel, Comptroller General, Liz Gilliland, ADM, Leadership and Learning Centre, BCPSA, Wayne Locke, Senior Financial Officer, Ministry of Transportation

Two more ministry staff receive FMCP credentials

The 24th convocation of the Financial Management Certificate Program (FMCP) was held on January 13, 2005, at the Hotel Grand Pacific in Victoria.

Sixteen government employees successfully completed the program in 2004, and 13 were present to receive their certificates from Tamara Vrooman, Deputy Minister of Finance; Arn van Iersel, Comptroller General; and Liz Gilliland, Assistant Deputy Minister, Leadership and Learning Centre, BC Public Service Agency.

Since its inception in 1982, the FMCP has graduated a total of 273 British Columbia government employees.

The program was introduced to ensure a reliable supply of professionally trained personnel to fill financial positions across government.

The ceremony began with words of congratulations, support and encouragement from the three presenters, followed by presentation of certificates to the graduates, then photographs and refreshments.

The Ministry of Transportation graduates are:

* Kari McKeel, Budget Officer

* Veena Sunder, Procurement Administrator

Kari was unable to attend the convocation ceremony. Congratulations to both of you! For more information, see the web site at http://www.bcpublicservice.ca/awards/ai/ai_index/emp_stories/fmcp_2004.html

New circle route upgrades 50 km in two months

The monumental task of upgrading 50 kilometres of road in just two months for the new Pacific Marine Circle Route between Port Renfrew and Lake Cowichan might even have seemed too daunting a match for our ministry's "can-do" attitude, but regional project manager Terry Murphy of Nanaimo has risen to the challenge. They said build it, so build it we will!

One of the world's largest international design consultants, AMEC, is working with Terry. The project includes 50 km of clearing and brushing, base widening and strengthening, surfacing, safety improvements for structures and alignments, drainage and environmental enhancements as well as providing pullouts for the public and industrial users.

Watch for the story on the completed project in the summer issue of the Road Runner. In the meantime, here are a few photos of work being done, and the road being used.



New appointments around the ministry

Sherry Barnes

Sherry Barnes is the new Capital Program Analyst in the Program Development and Monitoring Branch at headquarters, assisting in capital program administration and monitoring. Among other duties, Sherry will be responsible for the day to day administration of project funding agreements and change requests and for the regular project and program monitoring functions that our branch is responsible for.

Sherry has worked for the ministry since 1995. She brings with her a wealth of administrative and organizational talents. Much success in your new role, Sherry!

Jean Bishop

Jean Bishop has joined the Ministry of Transportation as the successful applicant for the position of RIMS Program Lead in the Construction and Maintenance Branch at headquarters. Jean comes with a great background in geography and geographic information systems. She has several years of experience planning and implementing projects in the private sector. Welcome to the ministry, Jean!

Elizabeth Beck, person of many talents



Elizabeth Beck of the Passenger Transportation Board in Victoria is a multi-talented person. She writes poems, articles and novels, and is an artist. She loves the outdoors and often expresses this in her art.

This issue of the Road Runner features her children's transportation story, "Big Mouth," and a sample of her artwork.

Elizabeth is mother to one son, James Zachary.



In the twenties, a robust river ran through a remote wooded area of northern British Columbia. People lived in log cabins on both sides and a mail boat only made a trip once a week. The long delay ruined most news. By the time a joke made its voyage it wasn't funny anymore. A thank you message arrived too late to sound grateful, and if someone was sick the 'get well' reached them either healthy or deceased.

The trees listened to the people's grumbling. Gradually, they started whispering to the children about building a raft to cross the river. The children spent the long winter foraging for wood so that by the time spring arrived they could begin building. Often they had races rolling logs to the riverbank. When the weather warmed they began hammering metal eyelets into the wood so they could join the logs together.

One day a road crew from the Ministry of Buggies and Dirt Roads noticed the busy children. They listened as the kids explained how they wanted to build a giant raft to reach across the river. The crew raised their eyebrows because the river current was too strong. It would not be allowed. Rather than disappoint the children, they told them that they would look into building a wooden truss bridge. They promised to let them know as soon as possible.

Big Mouth

After many months, Garth from the road crew returned to say that the ministry was ready to begin and there would even be room for a troll. Everyone wanted to help. The blacksmith was the first one to get a job. Later, the men at the mill were called. Soon even the baker was making goodies to feed the workers. The girls made flower chains to decorate the bridge on its first day and the boys made a sign for a troll's new home under the bridge.

When the bridge was finished everyone walked across it singing. Only one carriage at a time could cross but a few lined up. The men cheered and the postman sneered because now they wanted him to walk across the bridge everyday. Everyone told more jokes and rushed to spread news because now they could. That was when the bridge was first built.

The wooden bridge started to get weary when people began using motor cars even though the bridge's troll chased the heaviest loads away. The trees that made the bridge creaked more and some of the wood regretted getting involved. The children grew up forgetting about their love of the bridge as they had families of their own. More people with more families moved to each side of the

river and more food was carried back and forth on the bridge. Soon the ministry decided that a bridge of steel was needed. The ministry called in foreign engineers. They measured and estimated. Then they built the most outstanding bridge. It was further away from the center of town because no one wanted to remove the old bridge. It had metal teeth and a two-lane road. Its girders could even talk.

At first the bridge said it wanted to charge a toll but the people at the ministry could not decide on an amount so they made it free. The problems began when the steel bridge began to brag. It said that it had shinier paint than the lady who wore all the make-up. It claimed to be taller than the basketball players and more silver than the river fish. The bridge always had something to say. At first people agreed with it as they drove across in the latest vehicles, but then they realized that the bridge had never thanked them. The bridge even tried to talk the ministry into making its troll sign a hundred year lease. The troll just left and maybe that was when the bridge stopped being a real bridge.

Gradually, people started taking the old bridge more often. They decided to walk rather than ride. The steel bridge was too loud. It didn't squeak or groan but it bragged and bragged and bragged.

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Great work pays off

Teresa Bepple, Jeanne Wilson and Cuda Brown, financial analysts in the Southern Interior Region, were recently rewarded for a job well done. Regional Director Tracy Cooper acknowledged the group for their diligence and determination in compiling the EMR each month and providing excellent analyst support to staff across the region. Congratulations, Teresa, Jeanne and Cuda, and thank you!



Whatever happened to Randy Buksa?

Submitted by Bill Smith, Project Director, Okanagan Corridor

I was successful in winning a position as a property agent with Alberta Highways when the Kootenay Region's Properties office was closed. I've been here for two years now. The cost of living here is greater than B.C., but the wages are higher. Utilities, car insurance, property taxes (no homeowner's grant) and income tax are all higher, about \$2,500 to \$3,000 per year.

Barrhead is one of four regional offices, about an hour and a quarter northwest of Edmonton. The distance from Barrhead to Edmonton is similar as Chilliwack to Vancouver but the travel time is like Langley/Surrey to Vancouver. Population is 5,000 and 15,000 in the county, very similar to Creston/Grand Forks, except no mountains.

Nicole and I have been renovating our 1977-built 1,900-square-foot rancher. The house is on the town limits. We have a view of fields and live across from a retirement home, so it is

quiet. Austin Powers would have been proud of the decor. It had avocado green appliances, chocolate brown bathroom fixtures and yellow shag carpet.

Our daughter, Delaine, is in Grade 3 and involved in swimming, dance, baseball, judo and Brownies.

Since moving here, I have completed all the International R/W association (SR/WA) courses (had most of them already) and have been awarded the SR/WA designation. I also finished taking Commerce 499 (demo appraisal) at UBC which is the final course I need for the AACI (Accredited Appraiser Canadian Institute). I just need to pass the oral AACI exam in December to become one of 1,600 AACIs in Canada.

Things are done differently here. They get project appraisals as the land is pretty homogenous, unlike the Kootenays where each parcel was different and requires its own appraisal. Depending on time and project size we either do the work ourselves or hire contractors.

Big Mouth: The story continues...

(Continued from page 12)

"It doesn't even have a troll," said Sally, a shy girl. "My mother hates it," said Fred, the boy who loved to draw alligator heads. "I love the old bridge," said the lady who made the children cookies. Soon everyone wanted to use the old bridge again. People signed a petition telling the ministry what they wanted.

The ministry was amazed that all five thousand of the people who lived in the area signed. They decided to use the steel bridge for parts to reinforce the old wooden bridge. When they started taking apart the steel bridge it stopped bragging but it was mad that no one liked it. One by one, it lost its shiny steel girders. Soon the water where it had stood was clear.

When the steel bridge was gone people started to call that part of the river Big Mouth. New people always wonder why it is called Big Mouth, because a river's mouth usually flows into the ocean. Each time the story of the steel bridge is repeated anew. No one ever forgets why the middle of the river is called Big Mouth and no one around there ever brags.

Renée Mounteney achieving her goals

Submitted by Julian Malinsky, District Business Manager, Kamloops

Congratulations to Renée Mounteney, who recently:

- Earned an Advanced Graduate Diploma in Management at the Innovative School of Management at Athabasca University via long-distance education.

- Won the competition for the Regional Financial Manager at the Southern Interior in Kamloops.

- Was awarded a 15-year service pin and a recognition certificate for her commitment and positive contribution to helping the Thompson-Nicola District achieve its goals.

Renée was the District Service Manager for Jacques Dupas, DMT, in Nelson and three years ago moved to Kamloops to assume an acting position as the Regional Financial Manager while Debra Newby was on maternity leave.

Renée then moved to the District Service Manager position at the Thompson-Nicola District office in

Kamloops, working for Sherry Eland, DMT, for two years.

Renée is a very busy woman, working on a Master of Business Administration degree (with project management discipline) while working full-time. Work, education and limited sleep consume most of her available hours in a week, but somehow she still finds time for her two dogs, a new passion for golf, golf vacationing down the Oregon Coast, travel to Mexico and family and friends.

Renée is thankful to Sherry Eland, DMT, who has supported her career goals, education and training identified in her EPDP.

She attributes her success in winning the Regional Financial Manager competition to her new education and the support she received. She has thoroughly enjoyed her experience at the district.

Renée, the Thompson-Nicola District and your staff greatly appreciated your help for the past two years, especially your fairness, team play and your sense of humour. We wish you all the best in your new position and your other pursuits!



Survivor Palau action heats up in Kamloops



Back row (l to r): Martin Van Hoof, Wayne Fraser, Sue Stankieveh, Lois Park, Dawn Beck, Ramona Holota, Bonnie Fadden, Maurice LeFrancois, Corinne Chartrand
Front row (l to r): Joe Amyolt, Bob Penner, Graeme Cross

Submitted by Ramona Holota, First Nations Coordinator, Kamloops

Here are photos of our new Survivor Palau team players. There were 20 of us; then the buddy system broke in, and we now have 24! Wow! Missing in action from these photos but still hard at it for the game are Janelle Yardley, Leon Johnson, Jim Richardson, Teresa Beppe, Debra Newby, Art Barry, Malcolm Makayev, Shanna Mason, Deb Luison, Darren Lincoln and Bob Pratt.

We all got a little tropical frog as our mascot this time. They are cute! Now we'll see how things go and who will out-wit, out-smart and win the ultimate Survivor Palau.

We are looking at the top four this time and the remaining funds will go to the Social Club!



Crystal Chenier, our Social Club guru and an awesome Survivor team member

More web cameras are on the way

Submitted by Kevin Henderson, Electrical EIT

In recent months, the ministry's number of remote web-based cameras or "webcams" deployed around the province has tripled from four to 12. The intent of the webcams is to allow the traveling public to proactively assess the driving conditions at sensitive areas along major routes. Some additional benefits of the webcams include providing maintenance crews with information about road conditions and promoting tourism by displaying B.C.'s natural beauty.

The standard webcam configuration is a "system-in-a-box," requiring only external wiring for power. This has reduced the cost of design and installation as we do not require a telephone line to be brought to the camera. Instead the webcam system utilizes the cell-phone network to transmit camera images to the ministry's web server in Victoria every 15 minutes. However, there are some webcams that currently use standard telephone lines due to the limited coverage of the cell network in B.C.

Efforts are also being made to bring more webcams into the Lower Mainland area as part of a joint project with TransLink: the Regional Advanced Traveler Information System (RATIS). Images from key points in the Lower Mainland's highway system will be integrated into the ministry's website as part of this project. These cameras will allow travelers to view the traffic flow and plan alternate routes if necessary. The images from these cameras will be updated on the website every few minutes so the user can determine how congested a particular route may be.

Online: <http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/bchighwaycam/index.htm>



A webcam installation in Revelstoke

What ever happened to Taso Gavreil, anyway?

Submitted by Norm Parkes, Regional Manager Programming and Partnerships, Kamloops

Taso Gavreil worked for our Properties Services group for about 10 years. When he was released in June 2002, he formed Gateway Land Services Ltd., a company specializing in right-of-way acquisition, project management and property negotiations.

Taso's first contract was with the City of Kelowna to purchase properties for a significant road improvement project. He got his first contract immediately after leaving the ministry. Taso hasn't looked back. His company has inked deals with BCBC, various engineering companies, Terasen and its subsidiaries, and is branching out into Alberta.

"I had a great time working with the ministry. The skills I learned have been



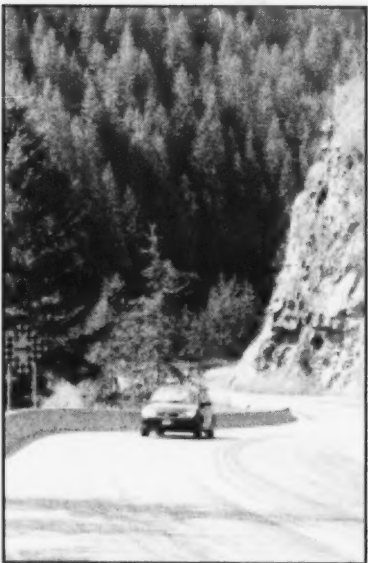
invaluable in the private sector," says Taso.

Taso doesn't do all of the work himself. He hires other small contractors (about 70 per cent ex-ministry employees) to help out.

"It was fun working with the ministry and it is great contracting to the ministry."



*Photos by
Ron Wiebe*



UVIC career fair helps promote the ministry

Submitted by Tammy Longbottom, Manager, Human Resources Planning and Development

The Ministry of Transportation recently attended a career fair at the University of Victoria to promote the Youth Employment Program, the EIT Program and other programs where we utilize external recruitment strategies. The ministry shared a booth with the Ministry of Forests during the two-day event. The fair was well attended by many individuals who expressed interest in learning more about the ministry. It was a great opportunity to market the ministry as an employer of choice! The Human Resources Branch has developed a career fair display unit with posters and brochures profiling the ministry employment programs. If anyone would like to borrow the unit, please contact Elizabeth Young in the Human Resources Branch.

Skills inventory boosts career options

Submitted by Lori Sutton, Manager, Human Resources Planning and Development

Congratulations to Stephanie Daniels, Operations Assistant, Rocky Mountain District, winner of a fleece vest for entering her profile into the skills inventory database last summer. The skills inventory allows employees the opportunity to

identify skills that they possess and wish to utilize on projects within the organization.

Managers can then search for employees with the skills that they are looking for when selecting a project team or work group. The system is available at <http://gww.th.gov.bc.ca/gwwhr/content/careerdev/careerdevtools.asp>

Deputy Minister's Awards

Congratulations everyone! The nominations are in, the selection process is completed and the 2005 Deputy Minister's Awards winners have been selected. And the winners are:

Significant Project Teams

Gord Chudleigh
Barry Bergstrom
Bill Smith
Brent Andrews
Helen Evans
Jim Guthrie
Greg Ross
Ken Aura
Dorian Grey
George Lomas
Clayton Tomas

Process Improvement

Denise Bollinger

Process Improvement Team

Marilyn Wargo
Tammy Longbottom
Lori Sutton

Safety Initiative Team

Rees Davidson
Mike Rutledge

Environmental Protection

Rob Buchanan

Environmental Protection Team

Tony Bennett
Rob Blackburn
Daryl Nolan

Leadership

Patrick Livolsi
Ross McLean
Dave Duncan

Fiscal Management

Doug Foster

**Support your co-workers
and attend their award
ceremonies:**

**Kamloops
April 8, 9:30-11:30 pm
Chapters Viewpoint
Restaurant**

**Prince George
April 8, 3:00-5:00 pm
Ramada Inn**

**Bumaby
April 14, 1:30-3:30 pm
Inn at Westminster Quay**

**Victoria
April 15, 2:00-4:00 pm
Hotel Grand Pacific**

**For more details, go to:
[http://gww.th.gov.bc.ca/
Content/RecognitionAward/
recognitionaward.asp](http://gww.th.gov.bc.ca/Content/RecognitionAward/recognitionaward.asp)**

Fiscal Management Team

Tami Lawes
Sharon Cowden
Jennifer Ingram-Kum
Heather Weir
Sheena Dorrell
Laurie Farquharson
Cathy Grossmith
Kim Anderson
Kari McKeel
Cathy Porter
Sandra Jackman
Greg Matisz
Janice Stevens
Kathy Strobbe
Betty McCaw
Maria Braden

Public Service

Sandra Weaver
Sharon Beck
Lenora Fillion

Technical Innovation Team

Brant Benum
Paul Hadfield
Steve Portman
Doug Tuck
Bill Golley
Paul Heikkila
Nic Seaton
Ted Weick
Simon Walker
Art McClean

Public Service

Don Wharf

Community Relations

Jeff Knight
Judy Gunderson

Field Services personnel recognized

Submitted by Shanna Mason, Director, Field Services

The 2005 Deputy Minister's awards have been completed and a number of Field Services staff were recognized for their contributions to the ministry.

They were Bob Penner, Keith Callander, Pat Taylor, Arnold VanReekum, Mike Johnston, Len Romanow, Brad Rikley, Joe Sam and the late Ed Ryan for being instrumental in the early development and implementation of end product specifications for paving, and Don Shaw for his leadership in technical innovation and achievement within the ministry and with stakeholders in the evolution of contract management and construction supervision.

From your Field Services colleagues, congratulations, everyone; you deserve the recognition for all you do! You do us proud!

Finally, the orange shag is gone from Revelstoke's office

Submitted by Glenn Olleck, Operations Manager, Revelstoke

Staff in the Revelstoke office endured some interesting working conditions throughout their recent office renovation. They did not relocate during the renovation, just worked right through the process, from Nov. 23 to Feb. 28. All employees should be commended for their patience.

Prior to the renovation, the office still had the original orange shag carpeting. It was still like new, prompting some to wonder, "What do they make shag carpet out of?" We just couldn't wear it out. New paint, carpet, some walls went up, some came down, and the end result is an amazing work space, very professional looking and customer friendly.

The avalanche crew had always been separated from the main office space. This renovation brought everyone into one workspace. If you are going through Revelstoke, please stop in and visit our new and improved office.

A special thanks from Rocky Mountain District also goes to the key players in making this renovation a success:

- Brian Jenkins
- John Hammond
- Matthew Groves
- Deborah Newby
- Bill Richards
- Bonnie Greenwood
- Robert Ferguson



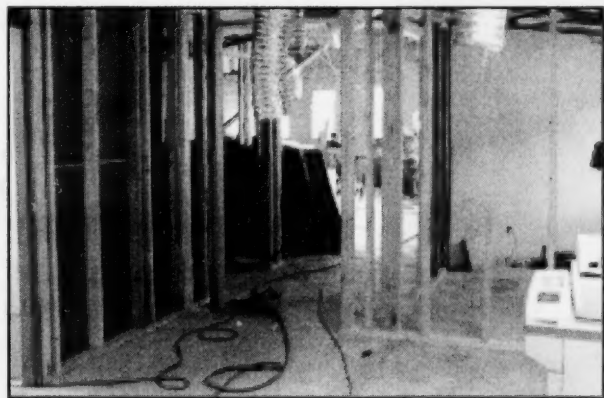
Left to Right: Debbie, Grainger, Brant, Rob, Deveta, Norm, Bruce and Greg. Missing: Brian, Glenn and Greg



Debbie Munroe, district clerk, in an interesting working arrangement. There were times where Debbie was hidden behind stacks of furniture, boxes and cabinets.



Did we mention that it was a bit dusty around here? Well, as the picture says, 'not very dusty,' anyway.



In the midst of construction, there were a few things missing, like walls, and a few extra things, like hanging ducts, almost everywhere in the Revelstoke office.

A heartfelt thanks to the ministry for 24 months of great support

Submitted by Shanna Mason, Director, Field Services, Southern Interior Region

Two years ago I decided to plunge into school and pursue a Master's degree in Business Administration at Royal Roads University.

It's hard to believe, but the time has flown by and I am done. I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank the ministry for their support of my learning goals, in particular the following people:

Dan Doyle and John Dyble for asking me what I want to do with my life a number of years ago, planting the seed that there is more than Health & Safety out there.

Barry Wilton, Rodney Chapman and Tracy Cooper for supporting my pursuit and putting up with the disruption in their business units while I

attended my studies.

Markus Koloska, Nicole Pharand-Fraser, Reg Fredrickson, Dianne Froese, Don Shaw, Mike Newton, Barry Bergstrom, Keith Callander and Bob Penner for supporting me when my plate was overflowing, and being there when I wasn't.

Marilyn Wargo, Lori Sutton, Nancy Merston, Jeff Knight, Russ and Marni Fedoruk for listening to me moan and groan about assignments for the last 24 months.

Without the support of all these people I never would have taken the plunge and could not have made it through. Thank you!

For those of you thinking of furthering your education, I say, "Go for it!" There's no time like now, and it does go fast.

Things I learned:

- How little I know and how much I can still learn.
- How learning made me see a world of opportunities in front of me.
- How little sleep I can get by on.
- How scary it was admitting I didn't know the answer.
- How liberating it was finally admitting I didn't know the answer.
- How encouraging it is was when I realized I did know the answer.
- How supportive my friends and family were.
- How uptight adult learners can be.
- How neurotic I can be.
- How slow time crawled and how quickly the months flew by.
- How much weight, wrinkles and grey hair I could gain in 24 months.
- How much control I have over how I see the world and how I choose to face each day.
- And most importantly for me, how it's the learning that matters, not the grade — B's get degrees, too!

In memoriam - Rob Cahoon

Rob Cahoon, of the rehabilitation and construction section of the Construction and Maintenance Branch, passed away on March 8, 2004 at the age of 53. Rob was a valued 34-year employee of the Ministry of Transportation whose work ethic was without measure.

He made each day a happy one for his co-workers with his unique sense of humour, and his loss was keenly felt by staff who still find it hard to accept that he is gone. He was a loving family man, friend, neighbour and co-worker. We miss you, Rob.

